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ABSTRACT

This brief (half page) official position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children addresses the issue of inclusion. The right to inclusion is seen to be the right of all children to participate actively in natural settings within their communities. DEC supports full access to health, social service, education, and other supports and services which promote full participation. It also supports the role of the family in determining services. DEC supports: (1) the continued development, evaluation, and dissemination of full inclusion supports, services, and systems; (2) development of preservice and inservice training programs for families, administrators, and service providers; (3) collaboration among key stakeholders to implement flexible fiscal and administrative procedures supporting inclusion; (4) research on state of the art services; and (5) restructuring and unification of social, education, health, and intervention supports and services. (DB)

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DEC POSITION ON INCLUSION

The Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children held their Annual Business Meeting at the CEC convention in San Antonio. On April 5, 1993, the Division for Early Childhood adopted a DEC Statement on Inclusion which is printed below.

POSITION ON INCLUSION

DIVISION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD OF THE COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

ADOPTED: APRIL, 1993
Revised December, 1993

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Inclusion, as a value, supports the right of all children, regardless of their diverse abilities, to participate actively in natural settings within their communities. A natural setting is one in which the child would spend time had he or she not had a disability. Such settings include but are not limited to home and family, play groups, child care, nursery schools, Head Start programs, kindergartens, and neighborhood school classrooms.

DEC believes in and supports full and successful access to health, social service, education, and other supports and services for young children and their families that promote full participation in community life. DEC values the diversity of families and supports a family guided process for determining services that are based on the needs and preferences of individual families and children.

To implement inclusive practices DEC supports: (a) the continued development, evaluation, and dissemination of full inclusion supports, services, and systems so that options for inclusion are of high quality; (b) the development of preservice and inservice training programs that prepare families, administrators, and service providers to develop and work within inclusive settings; (c) collaboration among all key stakeholders to implement flexible fiscal and administrative procedures in support of inclusion; (d) research that contributes to our knowledge of state of the art services; and (e) the restructuring and unification of social, education, health, and intervention supports and services to make them more responsive to the needs of all children and families.

Endorsed by NAEYC - April 1994

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